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## MAN THE DISCONTENTED ANIMAL.

It is remarkable that man is the only animal that manifests discontent. This should either derogate from the general estimate of human worth, or it should make discontent respectable. I will not now pause to debate this point. I am struck, however, by the comparison between man and every other species of air-breathing animals as to their comparative grounds for discontent. Most undoubtedly, the species of such animals which has least cause for discontent with its lot in this world, is that one which alone manifests discontent—namely, *Homo*.

I do not know if it occurs very often to any one to consider the immense over-proportion of space which the human species has obtained on the earth's surface, in comparison with any other mammalian animal approaching to the same bulk. It is supposed that there are now from nine hundred to a thousand millions of human beings scattered over the globe. They have been increasing for ages, and seem as if they were yet to become much more numerous. The other animals in question have been as continually shrinking in numbers, excepting only those species which man encourages to breed for his own use; and they seem as if they would go on shrinking, while the human population advances. The lion, with all his kingly pretensions, the tiger, leopard, and other *Felinæ*, are rapidly becoming curiosities on the face of the earth, and in no long time will be extinct, or nearly so. In England and other civilised countries, the wolf, beaver, and other animals have vanished within the observation of history. Some others, as the elephant, rhinoceros, and great stag, appear, from their remains discovered in superficial deposits, to have perished before the island received a human population. All over the north of Europe and Asia, as well as North America, there was about the same period an abundance of elephantine animals, where only their bones are now to be found. Man may indeed be considered as a new *Androcl*, who has come in upon these regions and evicted one-half or more of the former tenantry. Wherever he has set his foot, he has had it in his power to tell other mammals whether they might stay or not. Those which he thinks useless must become scarce immediately. To others he can say, 'Well, I shall make some use of you; you may remain;' and they remain accordingly, but only to be his slaves. In some cases he has taken a fancy to animals which he had formerly banished, and given them a new footing as curiosities, or for the purpose of preying upon them; for example, the capercaillie, or cock of the woods. In the Highlands of Scotland, at this moment, he is granting to deer and grouse a larger scope than they perhaps ever had in less civilised times; but the *Tetraonidæ* need not plume themselves on this, nor the *Cervidæ*

carry their heads too high, as it is only to make game of them. In North America, we have seen for some ages a rapid increase of man with his train of serviceable animals, while the aboriginal beasts, the buffalo, deer, beaver, and many others, are perishing. In numbers he is a myriad, while they are everywhere but a handful. Such is also the case even with the domesticated animals; for dogs, though by no means scarce anywhere—horses, cattle, notwithstanding the encouragement given to their propagation—would make but a poor appearance in a census in comparison with their masters. It is rather amusing that the only creatures which can resist man, and keep their ground in co-ordination with himself, are the rats and mice, whose very insignificance in their individual capacity may be said to be their protection as a species. All others, it is evident, live only by his permission, and in as far as he finds them conducive to his own gratification.

These remarks, it will be observed, apply chiefly to mammalian animals; they might be extended farther down the scale, though not with the same force. They would be entirely true of the birds; for all the predaceous animals of this class are exactly in the same predicament with the beasts of the wild, while those useful for food are alone encouraged to breed; and the field-birds may be placed in the same category with the rats and mice, as maintaining a sort of defying position. They would also be true of the reptiles, which are everywhere shrinking from before the face of man. Fishes are palpably less liable to be affected by us, in consequence of their field of existence being so different from ours. The invertebrates are likewise comparatively safe in their individual pettiness and obscurity; although, as one remarkable fact, the pearl-oyster has almost completely disappeared from the Cingalese waters through the imprudent covetousness of man. With regard to land creatures of this kind, as insects, although it is often pointed out that they can more effectually trouble and injure us than any large animals whatever, it is also true that many of them have sunk before us. We clear a country of its woods, and substitute cerealia: myriads of insects and other small animals perish in consequence, simply because they have no longer requisite shelter and food. Whole genera have in this way become extinct in various parts of the earth.

Somewhat odd it must be admitted to be, that the one animal which has thus, for thousands of years, been killing and eating, extirpating and encouraging the rest, and which has been able to spread itself in multitudes over the earth, while others have been continually shrinking into smaller space, is the sole animal which ever grumbles at its fate.

This may be said to be the case as regards species against species. Let us now see how it fares with the individuals of the human species as against the indi-

viduals of other species. We hear much of the difficulty of procuring a subsistence in this world, of over-population, and of the sad outlet from these evils through disease and mortality. Most undoubtedly there is not certain meat for every new human mouth: be it from what cause it may, be it wholly remediable or not, such is the fact. But is this true of the human species only? Alas! no. With no other species is there certain food for every particular mouth. With every one of them, the expansion of their numbers must be submissive to the accident of the amount of provision. All are liable to occasional short commons, and multitudes are continually dying off to allow room for the remainder. In some of the obscurer walks of creation, it is only vouchsafed to certain species—as, for example, the parasites on corn—to live now and then, as occasion may arise in the course of certain physical contingencies. Let the weather improve to human sensation, and whole genera will perish at once, remanded to the dormancy of the ovum for years to come. Even species so high as birds are sometimes all but extirpated by the severity of seasons. All this time the enormous abundance of human population is allowed to remain, with only a few occasional croppings of the weaker members. Our deviceful genius and foresight, and the control we are enabled to exercise over our inclinations, enable us to get over the synopses of visitations of Providence with comparatively little suffering. And yet so it is that we are the discontented animal.

We have still another contrast to draw between man and the inferior creatures. Of these no single specimen has it in its power to extort from nature one-thousandth part of the enjoyment which man may realise by his labour and ingenuity. It is true that their wants are narrow, and when these are satisfied, as in fair circumstances they usually are, there is no occasion for complaint. Man, on the other hand, has an infinitely greater number of needs, and the disappointment he suffers when these are not gratified is very poignant. He is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward. But it could be easy to show that it is better to have many desires, even at the hazard of these being somewhat starved, than to have few or none, with no such danger. Man clothes himself, houses himself, exalts the palatableness of everything he eats by cooking, bewitches himself with fine music and exquisite works of art, indulges in gorgeous dreams, obtainable through the medium of history and elegant literature, and in fancy may escape from any sordid character or situation into one purely heroic and dignified; none of which privileges belong to the lower animals. By industry he may surround himself with numberless blessings, and under favour of social laws, he may store these up to any amount for future use, or for the use of his posterity. No such advantages are in the power of the unhousehold denizens of the common and covert. On them every need falls with its own direct and immediate force; and if it cannot be satisfied at the moment, there is no remedy. Yet, again, with all these immense boons conferred upon him by the Almighty, man is the only discontented animal!

It thus appears as if our discontent were a very unreasonable thing, and that the humbler animals excel us in this respect. But can such a doctrine be received? Assuredly not. Among all the eccentricities of philosophy, no one could be found to maintain that the unrepining submission of these animals to the routine of their lot, and to every contingency of external nature, is to be more admired than the restless solicitude of man to remedy all passing evils, and improve his situation upon the earth. Seeing the connection between the easy contentment of the lower animals and a humble grade of intellect, and between human discontent and comparatively high intellect, we cannot avoid the conviction that discontent is a thing relative to a superior mental development. The alternative, then, to be chosen in the dilemma with which we set out, is, that there is a respectability in discontent as concerns our

general character. We have it as a privilege, as part of the outshining glory of human nature, not to be too easily pleased or satisfied. Observe, it is only so as concerns our general character, and, it may be added, our general status on the earth. A grumbling, unsatisfiable temper remains in the individual as ugly a feature as ever; and to every one in his own particular walk and immediate circumstances, a contented and resigned spirit must be great gain. Thus it is that every disposition in human nature has its good and its bad aspect; or it may be more expressively said, there is a virtue and a vice in everything.

#### FROM THE GREY TO THE WHITE.

FIFTY years ago, could we have followed a piece of cotton cloth from the loom, we should have seen it packed in great bales, and shipped off to Holland to be whitened. Could we have watched its further progress, we should have seen it consigned to some Dutch bleacher, and under his hands undergo a process of boiling in potash lees, and of subsequent washing and soaking in buttermilk, and then we might have beheld hundreds of acres of green grass covered with the fabric, forming one immense carpet of calico. After an exposure to the summer sky for months, autumn would see it all gathered up again, repacked, reshipped, and in the hands of the English manufacturer once more. Indeed in many instances we need not have left England to see this primitive method of bleaching, for many a fair English field was likewise turned into a 'bleaching croft.' A period extending over several months was thus necessary to give a snowy lustre to this product of the loom.

Science has now outstripped time and the whitening influence of the solar ray; and by a combination of many, but simple and rapid processes, has wrought out in a day what was formerly the work of many weeks, even when aided by the most favourable atmospheric influences. We propose, by recounting what was brought under our personal observation at one of the great bleach-works of this country, to bring the various interesting steps by which this remarkable process is so swiftly effected under the reader's notice, satisfied that it both deserves and will receive his willing and attentive consideration. The last of the textile processes concerned in the production of calico, power or handloom weaving, leaves the cloth in a condition as to colour and surface wholly unfit for the finer purposes of human life. Technically, the cloth is said to be in the 'grey;' but in reality its hue is that of a pale buff. This is due to the presence of resinous and amylaceous colouring particles in, or united with, the vegetable fibre. As these, in the process of bleaching, are acted upon by chemical reagents, which do not, at least when applied in the same proportionate strength, affect the vegetable fibre, they are partly extracted from the tissue, and partly decomposed. Thus bleaching—so far as principles are concerned—becomes resolved into a very simple process; although, it must be added, certain curious chemistries are concerned in it, the exposition of which is not very easy. The surface also of the cloth is so manifestly rough, downy, and covered with loose fibres, that it is evident it must be submitted to some smoothing procedure before it can possibly be fitted for apparel or for the process of calico-printing. The last of these processes—the 'smoothing'—will be very quickly got over; but the first—the extraction and decomposition of the colouring principles of the calico—will occupy the entire remaining portion of our paper.

A vast chimney, standing in solitary majesty, and blackening the whole sky with the smoke of its pipe, marks out the position of the great bleaching establishment we visited. The peculiar sound of dashing and tumbling waters, with the deep roll of machinery, and with every now and then the escape of a cumulus of steam up into the air from the roof of one portion of the building, assures the visitor he has not mistaken

his destination, and the opening door lets him in to the tumultuous scene of labour. A strong smell of burnt tinder fills the air, and is perceived to proceed from a low-roofed, small building, detached from the rest of the establishment. This is the 'singeing' house. Standing at the door of this place, a rather alarming scene is brought before the eye. There is a low furnace in the centre of the room, with a fire beneath glowing at white heat. At the upper part of the furnace is a semi-cylinder of copper, heated to a bright red, and a man is seen winding a long piece of calico right over this burning metal. Every instant we expected the fabric to burst into a blaze. But no! a cloud of glowing sparks rose up the chimney, but the tissue continued to pass smoothly and safely over, being wound on to a roller, and wetted as it was wound up by a number of minute jets of water. This process is repeated three times—twice on the 'face,' and once on the back of the calico. By this curious plan all the light downy matter is actually burnt clean off; yet the fabric is uninjured, in consequence of the rapidity with which it is made to pass over the hot metal. One ton of coal, in a good furnace, will by this simple method smooth about twenty-four miles of calico! The cylinders used to be of iron, and were burnt away in a week; now they are copper, and last for two or three months. A more ingenious process has been patented, in which the downy particles are burnt away by causing a number of minute jets of gas to be, as it were, sucked through the fabric, and thus these light particles are consumed and carried away in an instant. We believe there are actually large singeing works in which this patent is carried out, where only *singeing* is done; but the process applies to a great number of other goods besides calico—such as bobbin-nets, muslins, &c. To have had such a piece of cloth as this looks now, being of a deep nankeen colour, from the effects of the singeing, put into his hands to bleach, would have driven a Dutchman almost to despair half a century ago; and it does in fact look as if we had made a step farther back instead of in progress.

The first great object has now been accomplished. The surface of the fabric is in that condition as to evenness and freedom from down which the manufacturer desires, and which the ultimate processes it is to be subjected to imperatively demand. The roll of cloth is therefore removed, and conveyed in trucks to that portion of the works which, though the entire series of processes is now totally different, still retains the old name, the 'bleaching croft.' It is an apartment of great size, paved with freestone, and abounding in cisterns, drums, and shafts in great numbers; and it would be well for the visitor to be furnished with waterproof shoes and upper clothing if he would watch minutely the various splashing operations which are conducted here. Some expert needlewomen are stationed in one part of it, whose duty it is to sew the ends of the pieces of singed cloth together until a continuous web is formed, containing from 400 to 500 pieces, and being from 6 to 8 statute miles in length. This vast quantity of cloth is disposed in a convenient heap, and one end of it is drawn into the washing-engine. This machine consists of two long horizontal wooden rollers, one of which is suspended above, and the other lies under water in an appropriate cistern. The cloth passes over and under these rollers a great number of times in a gentle spiral, and leaves them in the middle, to travel onward, and to be laid in folds on a four-wheeled truck a little in front of the machine. As a large supply of pure water is continually pouring into this engine, the soiled water escapes from it, and carries with it all that 'dressing' or paste which the weaver so sedulously introduced in the manufacture of his cloth. It would thus not be difficult to show that many thousands of barrels of flour are actually wasted in giving an *appearance* to the cloth; and the first machinery which applies the dressing, and the last, whose only intention is to remove it from the same fabric, with their original cost of construction, and

the continued outlay of power for their working, being also taken into consideration, it would become manifest that many thousands of pounds are thrown away in the attempt to make an article look better than it really is.

The intention of the next process is the extraction of any resinous or oily matters from the cloth. To effect this, at the farthest side of the croft-house there is a set of curiously-arranged caldrons of cast-iron, seven or eight in number, and sufficiently capacious to hold *each* enough of cloth to describe, if laid evenly down, the circumference of the metropolis. These are called technically 'keirs.' They are of a curious construction: in the centre of each is a perpendicular iron pipe, with a sort of bonnet over its orifice; they have also a perforated false bottom, into which steam is blown; and when the caldron is filled with water and cloth, the injected steam forces up the water in interrupted jets through the pipe, which, by means of the bonnet, disperses it all over the cloth; and this process is continued, the liquor being a strong lye of lime, for eight hours, 1500 pieces being boiled at once. To see one of these great boilers in full work is to have a mimic geyser brought before the eyes, whose roarings and spoutings would not do discredit to the great original. The cloth is hauled out of the keir at the conclusion of this process by revolving rollers, and once more passes, at the rate of four or five miles an hour, through the washing-engine. All the alkaline liquor which it contained is thus washed away; but in order to insure its removal more completely, the cloth travels from the washing-engine into one upon precisely similar principles, only that, in the place of water, it is made to contain a very dilute solution of sulphuric acid and water. This is called by the artisans employed in the process the first 'souring.' From the souring-engine it is again taken to be washed in pure water, to get rid of the superfluous acid; and if the cloth is now examined, it will be found to be gradually gaining a whiter aspect, though still far from white. It has now to undergo another boiling. Once more the revolving rollers, which are suspended from the ceiling in a convenient position near the keir furnaces, are set in motion, and pour down a swift stream of cloth into the hot and yawning caldron beneath. The keir is this time filled with a dilute solution of soda-ash, and the boiling is continued for ten hours. This time being expired, the end of the immense length is hauled out, and put in connection with the hard-worked washing-engine, which fulfils its usual office, and discharging the washed cloth, it is directed by a man into a square receptacle, and stacked up there.

From this point the other class of bleaching principles come into play. The resinous and oleaginous matters have been fully extracted by the previous alternate alkaline lixiviations and washings in pure water. The colouring principles which remain, and give the cloth now a dirty pale yellow tinge, not being amenable to the powers of alkaline solution, must be dealt with by direct chemical energies. This, in fact, is the commencement of what in strictness should be called the bleaching process. The preparation vulgarly called chloride of lime, more properly chlorinated or chloruretted lime—for the first phrase indicates a chemical composition which does not belong to it—is that which effects this remarkable decomposition. It has received the strange-sounding title of 'chemick,' probably to contrast bleaching by chemical with the old plan of bleaching by solar influence. The 'chemicking' process is thus conducted: about twenty-two pounds of 'chloride of lime' are mixed together with water, and the solution being brought to a proper strength, is conveyed into a machine of the same construction as the washing-engine. The end of the piece is then directed over certain pulleys, and enters the bleaching-trough, where it is repeatedly immersed in the chlorinated solution; and on leaving the machine, is guided by a boy into a recess, where it lies in great coils for several hours. When it is considered to have



lain long enough, it undergoes a second process of immersion in dilute sulphuric acid and water. The effect of this is to produce a chemical decomposition in the chlorinated lime; the lime quits its equivalent of chlorine under impulse of the stronger affinity it entertains for the acid, and the gas thus liberated in every fibre of the cloth, decomposes the colouring principles, leaving the cloth almost in a state of perfect whiteness. The washing-machine again receives it, and cleanses away the acid; it is then soaked in a solution of soda, in order to avoid any free acid entering with it into the further processes; and again it is washed in clean water. It then goes through a second chemicking, is again allowed to lie, and is again soured, and afterwards washed. The cloth is now perfectly white; its complexion will endure even the favourite comparison—'as white as snow.' Every trace of colour has been removed, and a spotless purity is left. It is then thoroughly soaked in hot water, is passed between a pair of wooden rollers, which perform that hydro-extractive operation called by the laundresses 'wringing,' by squeezing the cloth powerfully as it passes between them until it is almost destitute of water, when it takes a final leave of the croft in which it has played so many bustling parts, by disappearing from view through a hole in the ceiling.

A general analysis of these numerous processes—in all, *seventeen* in number—will facilitate our apprehension of the whole subject. Looking at them with attention, they resolve themselves into three classes:—1. Alkaline lixivation; 2. Application of the chlorinated solution; and 3. Its decomposition in the fibres of the tissue by dilute sulphuric acid. The washing is to be considered simply as a depurative process. These processes look to two kinds of colouring matter in the cloth: one soluble, and removable by solution in alkaline liquors; the other insoluble, and only to be removed by making up its chemical composition under the influence, it has been supposed, of nascent oxygen, which some views of the chemical phenomena concerned would appear to show present in the case. We do not intend, however, to plunge the reader into a maze of chemical problems. A clear conception of the whole may be gained by bearing in mind the few and easy principles above stated. No one entering the croft ignorant of these could fail to be perplexed to the last degree by the apparently inextricable confusion of the numerous operations passing before his eyes. The number of white bands which, like huge serpents of endless length, fly hither and thither above his head, as if bewitched, and without the agency of human intervention to control their evolutions; the rattle of the pulleys over which they run; the dashing of the water in the washing, bleaching, and sousing-engines; the clattering of trucks on iron wheels, bearing their dripping loads to various places; and finally, the deep-mouthed, muffled roar of several of the keirs—all unite to form a scene the most extraordinary and confounding imaginable.

Mounting a flight of stairs, we have the snowy cloth once more brought under our notice. Here the long compound piece is unrippled into the original lengths, which, united, extended to 70,000 yards, or about 24 miles. They are then individually folded, and as far as possible rendered free from creases. Thence they are taken into large drying apartments, with lattice-windows, the temperature of which is kept at a considerable elevation by means of steam pipes, and being suspended on long poles, they are quickly dried. After a little time they are removed from hence to the folding and packing-rooms; from which places, after having been put up in convenient parcels, they are sent off to the Manchester warehouses, or possibly to the print-works connected with this establishment at Mayfield in Manchester.

This beautiful process, on the whole, is perhaps more indicative of our era than many which receive more attention from the curious. It shows us science in one of its most elegant applications to art. It shows us

also the resources of our splendid and powerful mechanism applied to carry out the purposes of philosophy. And when, unitedly, we consider the science, skill, and capital, which meet only to change the colour of a vegetable tissue to one which is the synthesis of all colour, we have before us a manufacturing process which the thoughtful mind will not fail to endow with a very high rank in the list of the *notabilia* of our time and country.

#### THE CONDUCTA DE PLATAS.

I HAD been for some days in a state of uncertainty whether to travel from Mexico to Vera Cruz in my usual manner, or to take a seat in the diligence, which, drawn by fleet horses, performed the journey in four days. It was rarely, however, that the vehicle escaped a summary visitation by the numerous robbers who infested the route. A simple incident decided me. Advantage was taken of a temporary lull in the internal affairs of the country to despatch a rich *conducta de platas*, or convoy of silver, to the coast; and while watching the process of loading the mules in a courtyard of the street in which I lodged, I determined on attaching myself to the escort selected to accompany the train. About twenty muleteers, whose imprecations embraced every variety of tone, were packing the bags of dollars in small wooden chests, and strapping them to the backs of the mules. Each *talega*, or bag of 1000 dollars, weighs between sixty and seventy pounds, and a load comprises from four to six bags. The animals, as soon as the precious burdens were properly secured, grouped themselves instinctively together in one corner of the enclosure.

The *arriero* (chief muleteer) was signing the last vouchers, interrupting himself from time to time to invoke the Virgin and saints for a successful journey, or to storm at his assistants. In the street a crowd was collected, gazing with greedy eyes on the two millions of specie, exposed to all the hazards of a long and perilous route; and the greater part of these tattered spectators took no pains to dissemble their covetousness.

'*Canario!*' exclaimed a *lepero*, hiding the scars on his breast under a ragged blanket, 'if I only had a horse like the one between that cavalier's legs.'

The lepero's eye designated a swarthy-complexioned *ranchero*, mounted on a jet-black steed. The animal, held in check by his rider, champed his bit, and shook off flakes of foam to the right and left. I could not but admire the beauty of the horse, and remark at the same time the unconcern of the rider, who appeared to restrain the creature solely by the force of an inflexible will—a distinctive characteristic of Mexican horsemen.

'What, then, friend Gregorito, what would you do?' inquired one of the lepero's companions.

'*Canario!* I would accompany the *conducta* as far as a certain place that I know on the road; and although it may be wrong to boast, I should be unlucky indeed if my wishes were not gratified by a load or two.'

'One or two loads!' rejoined the other with an air of surprise.

'Yes; three loads at most. I have always been unambitious; but that gay fellow there appears to have still less of ambition than I.'

In fact, at least in appearance, the *ranchero* regarded the convoy with a look of disdain; and whatever were his thoughts, it would have been difficult to detect any other expression on his impassive features than perfect indifference.

Meanwhile a squadron of lancers, destined for the escort, had much trouble in keeping the entrance free of spectators, of whom Gregorito was one of the most modest in expressing his desires. At last the work of loading was ended, the last mule walked out of the yard, and the detachment filed off to accompany the train. Gradually the crowd dispersed, and soon no one was left of all the curious gazers but the *ranchero*, who

seemed to be counting the mules one by one, and observing attentively each muleteer as he passed. At last the ranchero himself was in turn about to depart, when the lepero Gregorito came up, and asked permission to light his cigar at that of the cavalier. An animated conversation in a low tone took place between them; but I paid no attention to an incident apparently unimportant, and returned to my lodging.

I bought a horse for my valet, and made other preparations, intending to set off after the conducta on the following morning; but my plans were frustrated by the breaking out of a revolution—almost an everyday occurrence in Mexico. After twelve days of anarchy and bloodshed, which, effecting no real good, had opened prison doors to atrocious criminals, and caused a large amount of misery, order—or what was considered such—was restored. The conducta, which had gone into safe quarters during the commotions, I heard was again on the road; and having said farewell to my friends, I left Mexico for the last time one morning before sunrise, followed by my valet Cecilio.

After three days' riding we overtook the conducta a few miles beyond Puebla. In the first horseman to whom I spoke on reaching the escort, I had no difficulty in recognising a scapegrace of a soldier whom I had encountered several times during the fighting in the streets, and whom the fortune of war had raised to the post of lieutenant, which he had long coveted, under Don Blas, captain of the escort. After exchanging a few words, I rode forward to the side of the leader, and announced my intention of travelling with the convoy to Vera Cruz. He expressed satisfaction at the arrangement; but on my saying that I hoped to avoid the dangers of the route in his company, he shook his head and replied, 'I much fear that you will only fall from the frying-pan into the fire; for the late troubles have brought a few additional *gavillas* (robber bands) into the field, and I hear it is likely enough we shall have a crow to pluck with the rascals in the gorges of Amozoque. It is no longer the time as when, under a certain viceroys, the flag of Castile, floating above a silver convoy, was sufficient to protect it during the journey.'

'I trust,' was my answer, 'that a squadron of lancers commanded by you will be able to replace the Spanish flag.'

'May it be so!' rejoined Don Blas: 'but I am not blind to the dangers we may incur; at all events I shall do my duty.'

Although in a picturesque country, the journey, after a time, became somewhat monotonous; but I found an agreeable relief in the tales and songs of Victoriano, one of our muleteers. He had travelled the road for many years, and every halting-place afforded him a pretext for a recital. In the evenings, when the sentries were posted, and the stars shone out above our heads, the captain and myself listened to his animated narrations, or to his songs, accompanied by the guitar, with always new pleasure. On such occasions I pitied the travellers whom I saw fly past in the diligence, and congratulated myself on having joined the conducta.

We had travelled in this way for some days, when Victoriano recommended me to turn aside and visit the fort of Perote, offering to accompany me to the entrance, and added that I could rejoin the convoy at Cruz-Blanca, a village two leagues distant, where we were to pass the night. I followed the muleteer's advice, to the no small contentment of an officer, who was pleased to conduct me over the fortress as an agreeable interruption to the monotony of garrison duty. It was night by the time I reached our halting-place; I looked round for Victoriano, who had promised me an account of some extraordinary adventures for our evening's diversion, but he was nowhere to be seen. I learned, to my great surprise, that he had been missing for some hours: the whole camp was in alarm at the circumstance, as nothing short of a serious accident could have caused the absence of a man of such regular habits. While

lost in conjectures, an individual suddenly made his appearance, requesting an interview with the arriero. He informed us that Victoriano's horse having fallen, the rider had been so much hurt, as to be unable to continue his journey, and now lay under surgical treatment at Perote. He had come, he added, at Victoriano's request, to offer himself as a substitute until the other's recovery. Not having more men than were absolutely necessary, the arriero accepted the offer, perhaps without sufficient consideration; for the new-comer, though a robust fellow enough, had a face whose sinister expression did not inspire me with the same confidence as that of our absent muleteer.

The next day, before we had been an hour on the road, one of the mules lost his shoes, then a second, then a third, and long halts were necessary to replace them. Our new muleteer performed this task with much zeal and intelligence, to the great contentment of the arriero; but I could not repress my suspicions that all was not as it should be, and remarked to Don Blas that one so capable of refastening shoes might have been equally skilful in loosening them; the captain, however, treated my suspicions as pure chimeras. To make up for the delays, greater speed became necessary; but the mules seemed to have lost all their vigour, as though some enervating drug had been mingled with their food. The arriero, on whom all the responsibility rested, advised a halt, as night was coming on, accompanied by a dense fog; but the captain declared for pushing on to the place appointed for our bivouac. We were now entering on one of the worst parts of the route; our scarcely-distinguishable track lay through rugged ravines, bordered by lava rocks, and it became of the utmost consequence to prevent the mules from straying in the darkness. Sparks flew from the stones beneath the feet of the mule ridden by the arriero; and I could but pity him, as he galloped up and down counting and recounting the animals: their loss would be fatal to his fortune and his reputation. When night had fully set in, the captain, Don Blas, made two divisions of the escort: with one he placed himself at the head of the line of mules; the other brought up the rear.

As I rode cogitating on the probabilities of our position, my valet, Cecilio, came up and whispered—'Senor master, if you will take my advice, we shall not stay here a minute longer: strange things are going to happen.'

'And where to go,' I asked, 'when we cannot see two steps before us among these rocks and ravines? But what is the matter?'

'This, senor master, and perhaps I am the only one who has noticed it; Victoriano has just slipped himself in among us—that says nothing good—his fall was all a lie.'

'Are you sure?'

'I saw him; but that is not all: about a quarter of an hour ago, being in the rear, two cavaliers came by without seeing me, for I was hidden behind a lump of rock. One of them was mounted on a horse too magnificently black to be a peaceful traveller.'

'A magnificent black horse?' I interrupted, thinking of the ranchero who had so phlegmatically watched the departure of the convoy from Mexico.

Cecilio went on to state his conviction that the two strangers had insinuated themselves among our escort, and urged me to draw up until the train had passed. I refused, and spoke of advising the captain of what had occurred; but my valet was inclined to regard him as an accomplice of the interlopers. It was no time for discussion: I hastened forwards to warn at least the arriero. I was making my way by the side of some of the mules, when I observed a horseman a few paces distant, whom I took to be our new-comer of the night before. A minute later, the voice of one of the mule-drivers was heard through the darkness exclaiming, 'What means this? Eh, Victoriano, is it you? By Heaven, yes! and by what chance?'

No answer followed this interrogation: almost immediately the voice became silent. I shuddered: it seemed to me that I heard a suppressed gurgle, followed by the fall of a heavy body. I listened more attentively; the cold breeze alone mingled its sounds with the confused noise of footsteps. At the end of a few moments my horse made a sudden start, as though some fearful object had become visible through the gloom. Desirous of clearing up the terrible suspicions that crossed my mind, I took out my flint and steel, as if to light a cigar, as a solace under the freezing blast. For a moment I fancied myself the sport of a dream: by the light of the sparks, I saw a number of men marching pell-mell among the mules and their drivers. Silent phantoms seemed to have risen mysteriously from the darkness to march at our side, some dressed in the red coats of the lancers, the others in the coarse frocks of the subordinates. All at once the tinkle of the leading mule's bell ceased; presently it sounded again in an opposite direction, and similar tones came from the ravines to the left of the route. I had seen enough, perhaps too much: we were beset by treachery. Whom denounce in such a fog, and on such a road? Whom trust in obscurity that confounded friends and enemies? Astonished at the strange discovery, I hesitated: then, at the risk of breaking my neck, I made a dash for the head of the convoy. It was already too late. A cord whizzing through the air fell upon me; my horse started forwards; but instead of being dragged violently from the saddle, and trampled under the horses' feet, as was intended, I felt myself retained by a fearful compression. A running noose, destined for me alone, had lanced both horse and rider in the same fall. My right arm was held so tightly to my side as to prevent my cutting the cord; I dug the spurs into my horse's flank. The noble animal neighed, and strained his muscular haunches with irresistible vigour: I felt the noose grow tighter and tighter around me, then it relaxed; there was a bursting of girths, followed by an imprecation of rage, and in a moment I was free, before I had been able fully to comprehend the danger that menaced me. A report rang, a ball whizzed past my ears, and at the same instant arose a cry of alarm. Repeated discharges followed, and all became an indescribable confusion. The mules, deceived by the tinkling of the bell, which sounded from the most opposite directions, dispersed and jostled one another in their fright. The light of the musket-flashes showed the red coats of the lancers in disorder, as they fired at hazard into the impenetrable gloom; balls whistled past, and at times the despairing lamentations of the arriero sounded above the din.

My terrified horse had borne me some distance from the scene of combat; at last I forced him to retrace his steps. When I again reached the conducta, the struggle had ceased, the bandits had disappeared. Don Blas, who retained all his coolness, pressed my hand in silence: there was no time for questions. A man with a flaming torch in his hand rushed between us, imploring the captain's aid. By the light, I recognised the unfortunate arriero. Several soldiers, who had dismounted, cut down pine branches for torches, and we then saw a sad spectacle. The leading mule, robbed of its bell, stood surrounded by the others; for although deceived at first by the artifice of the robbers, the animals soon regained their usual instincts. Some were bleeding from large gashes. Two soldiers, also wounded, were endeavouring to stanch their blood with handkerchiefs; and in a hollow lay a poor muleteer writhing in agony. It was he who had recognised Victoriano, and he thus expiated the crime of having seen too much. After further search and counting, we ascertained, to the inexpressible consternation of the arriero, that five of the mules were missing. I suggested to Don Blas the propriety of immediate pursuit: the arriero added his intreaties, and offered half of the booty when recovered. Thus, whether an accomplice or not, the captain could not refuse to act. He fixed himself erect in

his saddle, selected a dozen of the best-mounted soldiers, and ordered them to provide themselves with pine branches, and follow him on the track of the robbers. It was one of those expeditions which eminently display American sagacity, and I persisted in accompanying the detachment.

The enterprise was perilous. As a measure of precaution, our torches were extinguished, and we turned off to the left, up the hard rocky steep. From time to time one of the men dismounted, and laid his ear to the ground; nothing, however, was heard but the rush of the wind. The stony soil, carefully examined by the light of a cigar, showed no traces of footsteps; and yet, by an inexplicable instinct, the soldiers felt assured that this was the path taken by the plunderers. By and by the clatter of hoofs abated: we were riding on softer ground, and soon distinct traces of two mules were discovered. All doubt as to the direction was now at an end; the soldiers, stimulated by the prospect of a rich prize, pushed forward with renewed spirit, though in strict silence. It would be tedious to relate all the incidents of this night. Sometimes all traces of the trail were lost; and at last we lit fires in a glade of the wood, and bivouacked till the morning. Just before daybreak a stray mule was met with, but completely divested of its valuable burden. Up to this moment Don Blas had manifested but little inclination for the pursuit: now the sight of the animal appeared to excite all his ardour, and he vented loud imprecations against the authors of the mischief, threatening to shoot the first that should appear. Our party broke up into twos and threes, to extend the search. The captain and I were riding together, when he picked up a fragment of one of the money-chests. He then begged of me to remain where I was, and not follow him, and quickly disappeared round a turn in the path. Shortly afterwards I heard a distant shot, followed by a feeble cry of distress. I fired both my pistols, and presently saw some of our soldiers approaching. A few words sufficed to explain matters: we galloped off in the direction of the report, and my fears were soon changed to certainty. The captain lay stretched on the grass, wounded by a ball in the breast. Broken chests and ripped-up bags were scattered about, but no enemy was visible. A glass of brandy, poured down Don Blas's throat, enabled him to speak. He told us that he had seen no one, but that he well knew who had fired the shot. An examination of the locality led to nothing that could clear up the mystery. We lifted the captain into his saddle, with a man mounted behind to support him, and set out to rejoin the conducta at La Hoya.

It was mid-day when we arrived; and here a new incident awaited us. Don Blas had scarcely been laid on the bed hastily constructed for him in one of the hovels of the village, when another party of soldiers came in with a prisoner bound. His dark features were half hidden by a handkerchief; yet I recognised a brigand with whom I had on a painful occasion been brought into contact in the interior of the country. The captain's pale cheeks became of a livid hue as soon as the captive was brought into his presence. Evidently they were not strangers. A recriminating parley took place, which ended by Don Blas declaring that the prisoner should be shot without further process.

'Shoot me!' said the other; 'surely you jest. I am not so deficient of protectors as you may think; and if it comes to that, I shall speak, senior captain—I shall tell'—

It was then Don Blas's turn to tremble: he ordered the apartment to be cleared, and remained alone with the culprit: after an hour, the latter reappeared in the custody of the lieutenant Juanito. We stayed two weary days at La Hoya; on the third, the captain, for whom a litter had been constructed, determined on proceeding to Jalapa. The prisoner, closely bound, was mounted behind Juanito, and after riding a couple of leagues, I observed that the horse on which they rode, wearied perhaps by the double weight, loitered in the



rear. Curiosity kept me near them; they were talking in most friendly terms, and Juanito, whose shoes were in rags, was loud in praises of a handsome pair of boots worn by the other. Just at this moment we reached the summit of the heights of San Miguel, and I reined up my horse, the better to enjoy the magnificent prospect. After a short halt I again rode on, and overtook the two laggards; the belt by which the prisoner was attached to Juanito's body seemed to have stretched greatly in the interval: I fancied the soldier was conniving at an escape, and kept a steady eye upon his actions. All at once the belt fell to the ground in two pieces, the robber slipped from the horse's back, and took to flight; but with a rapid bound Juanito was upon him, and a shot from his carbine stretched the fugitive dead at his feet.

This mode of disposing of the robber, it appeared, had been preconcerted between the captain and his lieutenant. Juanito obtained possession of the coveted boots, and on my demand for an explanation, replied that Don Blas had arranged for an attack upon the bags of dollars with the man just shot: they were to divide the spoil. But the robbery had been effected by another band, who had thus forestalled the more traitorous conspirators. It was one of that band who had wounded the captain; and the latter, believing himself betrayed by his accomplice, had contrived his death as related. But when Don Blas was made acquainted with the true state of the case, the violence of his emotions brought on an internal hemorrhage, which, after a few moments of agony, terminated in death.

This event completely took away any inducement I might have had to remain with the conducta; I therefore halted until long after the litter, surrounded by lowered lances, in sign of mourning, had passed out of sight, and towards nightfall rode forward with my attendant to Jalapa.

#### MOTHERWELL AND HIS POEMS.

AN able writer of the present day has attempted to prove the superiority of modern over ancient painting; but the like hypothesis has never been sustained in regard to the sister art—Poetry. The divinity of poetry is shown in her unchangeableness. She has no part either in social progress or social decline. The songs that charmed the rude ear of Greece, when bloodshed was a religious duty both of gods and men, are still the dearest music of the refined and Christian world. The ballads of our half-civilised ancestors, written when the language was as untutored as the men, are still the text-books of study, the 'well unde-filed' of inspiration.

The reason no doubt is, that in earlier conditions of society, more direct, and therefore more powerful, appeals are made to the natural feelings, which are the true stuff of poetry. As we advance in luxury, these may be overlaid with artificial refinements, and new schools may give form and method to conventional distinctions; but we never wholly forget our first loves, and never fail to reward with our smiles or tears those who strike the chord of nature. It has not been sufficiently noted that those epochs which imitate, as it were, the distractions of ruder times by civil war or other convulsions, have always been the most fertile in poetry; and that the Muse, even of the modern world, has sounded her loftiest notes amid public calamities or the clash of arms. There are always spirits, however, that have a leaning, irrespective of epochs and conditions of society, towards the simplicity and directness of old times; and when this is accompanied by a deep love of external nature, and the power of interpreting her forms and voices to the hearts of others, the result is true poetry.

Of such spirits was William Motherwell, a name to which criticism cannot award a higher place than in the first rank of minor poets, yet peculiarly worthy of our affection and regard. He was born in Glasgow in 1797, but received his earlier education in Edinburgh;

and there, while attending one of those humbler schools where boys and girls sat together on the same form, his poetical sympathies already began to develop themselves. His school companion, playmate, and friend, was a little girl called Jeanie Morrison, whom he never met again after their parting at the age of eleven. At fourteen, however, this girl still haunted him, and he tried to express in rude rhymes the gush of tenderness with which he turned to her gentle image. In later years the effort was resumed, and crowned by the production of a poem which no man of the most ordinary sensibility can read without a swelling heart and a moistened eye. In this exquisite lyric the little girl has evidently grown a woman in the expansion of the heart which contained her; and he wonders, with all the anxiety of a lover, whether he is as closely twined in the thoughts of the phantom of memory as she has been in his:—

'I marvel, Jeanie Morrison,  
Gin I hae been to thee  
As closely twined wi' earliest thochts,  
As ye hae been to me?  
Oh tell me gin their music fills  
Thine ear as it does mine?  
Oh say gin e'er your heart grows grit  
Wi' dreamings o' langsyne?  
  
I've wandered east, I've wandered west,  
I've borne a weary lot;  
But in my wanderings, far or near,  
Ye never were forgot.  
The fount that first burst frae this heart  
Still travels on its way;  
And channels deeper as it rins  
The luve o' life's young day.'

It is proper to note, while mentioning the early love of a poet (herself quite unconscious of the romantic feelings she had inspired), that 'her hair was of a lightish brown, approaching to fair; her eyes were dark, and had a sweet and gentle expression; her temper was mild, and her manners unassuming.'

Motherwell's education was completed at the grammar school of Paisley, where he appears to have gone through the then curriculum of Scotland, inflicted upon all boys, without the slightest regard to their own tastes or destination in after-life—namely, five years of Latin, with the superaddition of Greek in the fifth year. At the age of fifteen he was placed in the office of the sheriff-clerk of Paisley, and after some years' service, was appointed sheriff-clerk depute, which situation he retained with credit till the close of 1829.

During this period he made some attempts to supply the defects in his education; and he collected a considerable number of volumes, chiefly in poetry and historical romance. In 1819 he edited the 'Harp of Renfrewshire,' a selection of songs and other poetical pieces, with some originals, and an introduction and notes; but it was not till 1827 that the work appeared on which his literary reputation mainly rests—the 'Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern.' This work attracted considerable attention, and led to a correspondence with Sir Walter Scott on the subject of the curious old ballad of Gil Morrice. In 1828 Motherwell commenced the Paisley Magazine, and about the same time became the editor of the Paisley Advertiser; but in 1830 he accepted the editorship of the Glasgow Courier, which he retained till his death, five years later. With some contributions to the periodicals, a little volume of 'Poems, Narrative and Lyrical,' a joint edition with James Hogg of the works of Burns, which he did not live to complete, and his official struggles as a partisan of the expiring Tory party, this interval is filled up; and on the 1st of November 1835, William Motherwell, at the early age of thirty-eight, was suddenly called away by a shock of apoplexy in the very midst of the conflict of life.

Such is the brief and commonplace history of the man: that of the poet must be read in his works; and there we find the portraiture of a being as strangely different as it is possible to conceive from a provincial sheriff-clerk or a newspaper editor. Motherwell had

a deep and holy love for external nature—a love which, in a poet, can hardly be said to have *degenerated* into superstition, although he actually believed in the reality of the forms with which popular faith has invested her attributes. To his ear the forest wind, and the murmur of the river, were laden with the voices of spirits, and it was not the mere ghosts of memory that rose upon the darkness of the night. Conjoined, however, with these wild imaginations, there were the home-thoughts, the heart-yearnings, the social, friendly, family sympathies, which serve as a balance for the extravagances of fancy, and chain the dreamer to his true place upon the earth. Although involved for so many years in the strife of faction, and waging on his part a bitter and desperate party war, William Motherwell, we are told, when he was called from the world, left behind him not one personal enemy.

It may readily be supposed that the fancy which made itself a home in the supernatural world, turned away from the refinements and the philosophy of contemporary writers, to dwell with the singers of the Valhalla and the old balladists of his country. These he has not imitated in style and manner—he has identified his spirit with theirs; and no other modern writer we recollect has been so happy in that *directness* of effort, characteristic of the olden time, which unlocks by a single touch the fountain of sympathy. This is alluded to in an elegant criticism by Professor Wilson which appeared in 1833:—“All his perceptions are clear, for all his senses are sound; he has fine and strong sensibilities, and a powerful intellect. He has been led by the natural bent of his genius to the old haunts of inspiration—the woods and glens of his native country—and his ears delight to drink the music of her old songs. Many a beautiful ballad has blended its pensive and plaintive pathos with his day-dreams, and while reading some of his happiest effusions, we feel

“The ancient spirit is not dead—  
Old times, we say, are breathing there.”

“His style is simple, but in its tenderest movements, masculine: he strikes a few bold knocks at the door of the heart, which is instantly opened by the master or mistress of the house, or by son or daughter, and the welcome visitor at once becomes one of the family.”

In 1832 appeared the first edition in this country of Motherwell's poems, and fourteen years later the second, with many additional pieces; but in the interval two editions were published in America, where the poet, like Shelley and Keats, appears to enjoy a still higher reputation than at home. At length a third English edition has appeared, enriched with many additions from the author's manuscripts, selected by the taste of William Kennedy, himself a true poet, and a well-written memoir by Mr James McConechy of Glasgow.\* To this narrative we have been indebted for the above particulars of the life of Motherwell; and we shall now draw upon Mr Kennedy for one or two specimens of the new matter in the volume.

The following song strikes us as having much of the raciness as well as tenderness of Burns:—

“He courted me in parlour, and he courted me in ha’,  
He courted me by Bothwell banks, among the flowers sae a’;  
He courted me wi’ pearls, wi’ ribbons, and wi’ rings,  
He courted me wi’ laces, and wi’ money mair braw things;  
But oh he courted best o’ a’ wi’ his black blithsome ee,  
Whilk wi’ a gleam o’ witcherie eulst glaumour ower me.

We hied together to the fair, I rade ahint my joe,  
I fand his heart leap up and down, while mine beat faint and low;  
He turned his rosy cheek about, and then, ere I could trow,  
The widdifur o’ wickedness took aries o’ my mou!  
Byne, when I feigned to be sair fayed, sae pawkly as he  
Band’d the auld mare for missing fit, and thrawin’ him ajece.

And aye he waled the loanings lang, till we drew near the town,  
When I could hear the kimmers say—“There rides a comelie  
loun!”

\* The Poetical Works of William Motherwell; with memoir. By James McConechy, Esq. 3d edition: Greatly enlarged. Glasgow: David Robertson. 1849.

I turned wi’ pride, and keeked at him, but no as to be seen,  
And thought how dowie I wad feel gin he made love to Jean!  
But soon the manly chiel, aff-hand, thus frankly said to me,  
“Meg, either tak me to yoursell, or set me fairly free!”

To Glasgow Green I linked wi’ him, to see the ferlies there,  
He birl’d his penny wi’ the best—what noble could do mair?  
But e’er as fit he’d tak me hame, he cries—“Meg, tell me noo:  
Gin ye will hae me, there’s my life, I’ll aye be leal an’ true.”  
On sic an honest, loving heart, how could I draw a bar?  
What could I do but tak Rab’s hand for better or for waur?”

As a contrast, we may take the following, affording a fair specimen of the masculine character of his style:—

#### ‘THE KNIGHT’S REQUIRE.’

They have waked the knight so melkie of might,  
They have cas’d his corpse in oak;  
There was not an eye that then was dry,  
There was not a tongue that spok.  
The stout and the true lay stretched in view,  
Pale and cold as the marble stone;  
And the voice was still that like trumpet shrill  
Had to glory led them on;  
And the deadly hand, whose battle brand  
Mowed down the reeling foe,  
Was laid at rest on the manly breast  
That never more mought glow.

With book, and bell, and waxen light,  
The mass for the dead is sung;  
Thorough the night in the turret’s height,  
The great church-bells are rung.  
Oh woe!—oh woe!—for those that go  
From light of life away,  
Whose limbs may rest with worms unblest  
In the damp and silent clay!

With a heavy cheer they upraised his bier,  
Naker and drum did roll;  
The trumpets blew a last adieu  
To the good knight’s martial soul.  
With measured tread through the aisle they sped,  
Bearing the dead knight on,  
And before the shrine of St James the divine,  
They covered his corpse with stone;  
’Twas fearful to see the strong agony  
Of men who had seldom wept,  
And to hear the deep groan of each mail-clad one  
As the lid on the coffin swept.

With many a groan, they placed that stone  
O’er the heart of the good and brave,  
And many a look the tall knights took  
Of their brother soldier’s grave.  
Where banners stream and corselets gleam  
In fields besprent with gore,  
That brother’s hand and shearing brand  
In the van should wave no more;  
The clarions call on one and all  
To arm and fight amain,  
Would never see, in chivalry,  
Their brother’s mate again!

For a special purpose we add two stanzas from one of the poems of the older editions:—

#### ‘I AM NOT SAD.’

I am not sad, though sadness seem  
At times to cloud my brow;  
I cherished once a foolish dream—  
Thank Heaven ’tis not so now.  
Truth’s sunshine broke,  
And I awoke  
To feel ’twas right to bow  
To fate’s decree, and this my doom—  
The darkness of a nameless tomb.  
I grieve not, though a tear may fill  
This glazed and vacant eye;  
Old thoughts will rise, do what we will,  
But soon again they die;  
An idle gush,  
And all is hush,  
The fount is soon run dry;  
And cheerly now I meet my doom—  
The darkness of a nameless tomb.

In these verses Motherwell foretold what has hitherto been a truth. He was buried in the Necropolis of Glasgow, and the spot is undistinguished even by a headstone bearing his initials! A considerable sum of money was raised by subscription among the friends of the deceased poet; but it was no more than enough to succour those whom Motherwell had been obliged to leave to the charity of his friends. It is high time that the reproach of the nameless tomb were wiped off, and



we trust to see it immediately looked to. The following eloquent and elegant appeal from a brother poet (which closes the volume) will have more effect than all we could say on the subject:—

'LINES WRITTEN AFTER A VISIT TO THE GRAVE OF MY FRIEND WILLIAM MOTHERWELL, November 1847.

Place we a stone at his head and his feet;  
Sprinkle his sward with the small flowers sweet;  
Piously hallow the poet's retreat!

Ever approvingly,  
Ever most lovingly,  
Turned he to nature a worshipper meet.

Harm not the thorn which grows at his head;  
Odorous honours its blossoms will shed,  
Grateful to him, early summoned, who sped  
Hence, not unwillingly—

For he felt thrillingly—  
To rest his poor heart 'mong the low-lying dead.

Dearer to him than the deep minster bell,  
Winds of sad cadence at midnight will swell,  
Vocal with sorrows he knoweth too well,

Who, for the early day,  
Plaining this roundelay,  
Might his own fate from a brother's foretell.

Worldly ones treading this terrace of graves,  
Grudge not the minstrel the little he craves,  
When o'er the snow-mound the winter-blast raves—

Tears—which devotedly,  
Though all unnoted—  
Flow from their spring in the soul's silent eaves.

Dreamers of noble thoughts, raise him a shrine,  
Graced with the beauty which lives in his line;  
Strew with pale flow'rets, when pensive moons shine,

His grassy covering,  
Where spirits hovering,  
Chant for his requiem music divine.

Not as a record he lacketh a stone!  
Pay a light debt to the singer we've known—  
Proof that our love for his name hath not flown

With the frame perishing—  
That we are cherishing  
Feelings akin to the lost poet's own.

WILLIAM KENNEDY.'

#### A GLANCE AT THE HISTORY OF POPE PIUS IX.

AMONG the continental rulers whose wavering fortunes have fixed the eyes of all Europe during the last few eventful months, none have awakened such universal admiration, or so deep a sympathy, as Pope Pius IX. Even those who disavow his creed, revere the honesty of his faith; and although some may deny him the appellation of a *great* man, none will question his being a *good* one. At the present moment, when he is a fugitive from Rome, and his horizon clouded with cares and perplexities, it is curious to look back upon the brief period of his popularity, and to remember the day upon which he was installed as sovereign pontiff amid the cheers of a countless and enthusiastic multitude. It is more than probable that the imposing forms then observed, and which have been handed down to modern Europe, a last relic of the middle ages, may, in this day of reform, be swept away with the besom of destruction, and that henceforth they shall only live in the pages of history, or in the memory of man.

Let us say a word first about the obsequies of Gregory XVI. No sooner had the cardinal chamberlain verified the death of the pope by striking his head gently three times with a hammer, than the event was announced to the inhabitants of Rome by the great bell of the capital, and to all Catholic courts of Christendom by their respective ambassadors. A few days afterwards, the embalmed body, clothed in pontifical garments, was borne from the Quirinal to the Vatican on a splendid litter, carried by white mules, which were caparisoned in black, and escorted by torch-bearers, dragoons, Swiss guards, trumpeters, and artillerymen, accompanied by seven pieces of cannon.

To describe the imposing effect of this military and religious convoy would be as difficult as to reckon the multitude which thronged around the lifeless body,

which, clad in white, was borne aloft far above the heads of the crowd beneath. The couch of state was prepared in the Sistine Chapel, where it rose up as high as the frescos of Michael Angelo. Picture to yourself a colossal monument of velvet and silk, gold and silver, illuminated by a blaze of light. Gregory XVI. reposed on its summit, bearing the tiara on his head and the crozier in his hand. One might almost have thought that he still breathed. After three days and nights of unceasing chants and psalmody, came another convoy and another procession, as imposing as the first. This time the body was borne into the great Basilica of St Peter's, and an alcove was prepared for its reception, not less splendidly mournful than the couch of state. Here the holy father was laid in an inclined position, so that all could behold him from the tiara to the shoe-strings; and the multitude were admitted to kiss his feet, which, for this purpose, were suffered to project beyond the iron grate. This exposition and kissing of the feet lasted for three days, during which the church was constantly full. On the fourth day (the seventh of the obsequies) the body was deposited in the middle of the church, under the mausoleum where his predecessor had hitherto lain, the latter being now conveyed to those vaults whither Gregory in his turn will one day be borne.

The funeral oration, the last act of this melancholy drama, was pronounced in Latin, after which the *guardia nobile* laid aside their mourning; the mace-bearers bore away their maces; the cardinals attended the 'mass of the Holy Ghost,' and went into conclave to elect a new pope.

The word *conclave* defines admirably the state of seclusion and secrecy in which the sacred college is kept during this important period. The cardinals shut themselves up in the Quirinal with their aids and their physicians. Once there, they cannot quit the palace without a pope. Each day may be seen their respective equipages bearing along their dinner; sometimes a *poached egg*, escorted by *four horses* and as many *piqueurs*!

These repasts are conveyed through a trap-door, the only mode of communication permitted with the outer world. All the doors and windows are hermetically sealed; each voter inhabits a separate cell, and they only meet in the central chapel for the election of a pope. There are three modes of election—that by acclamation, by compromise, and by scrutiny. The latter is the most usual, and its form is as follows:—The dean of the sacred college votes first. He takes out of a silver basin a balloting-ticket, prepared beforehand for the purpose, and fills it up in presence of the cardinals, so that all may see his act, and yet none can read what he has written upon the parchment. Each candidate goes through the same formality. The voter next holds up his ticket between his thumb and forefinger, and turning towards the altar, utters aloud the following oath:—'I take God, who is my judge, to witness that I elect him whom I deem most worthy of being pope!'

Upon the altar is placed a large silver chalice, in which the voters place their tickets; and afterwards the names are read aloud by one of the *scrutatori*, each of the cardinals holding a printed list, on which he notes down the names as they are uttered. If, in this first operation, one of the cardinals has obtained a sufficient number of votes, he is immediately declared pope; but for this purpose two-thirds of the votes are required. Roman affairs usually progress but slowly, and conclaves have been known to last for five months. The affairs of Italy being at this moment rather in a perplexed state, it was suspected that the election would prove a dilatory one; and I went the first evening, out of mere curiosity, to look at the *fumata* upon the Piazza del Quirinal. I must tell you what is meant by this word *fumata*. At the end of each day's scrutiny, if no one has been so fortunate as to obtain two-thirds of the votes, the balloting-tickets are burned in a stove placed behind the altar, from whence the smoke issues by a pipe which is visible on the Piazza. If, on the contrary, any one has obtained the majority, the tickets are preserved with care, and there being no smoke without fire, the chimney of course

gives no sign of combustion. You may conceive with what impatience the expected signal is looked for by the crowd who assemble each evening in the Piazza. Thousands of eyes are fixed upon the roof of the palace until the solemn moment of the scrutiny. If a faint column of smoke is then seen to rise, the Romans wish one another a *Felice notte*, and go to bed: they have no pope, and the successful scrutiny is yet to come.

On the first day of the conclave a multitude were assembled to gaze at the fumata; and we saw it at the expected time rise up slowly over the roof of the palace. The next evening there were comparatively but few whom curiosity led to the spot; for 'there would be so many opportunities,' every one said, 'of seeing it again.' Judge, then, of our surprise when the solemn hour arrived without bringing with it a single curl of smoke.

'Surely,' said the lookers-on, 'there must be some unforeseen delay;' and every eye was fixed upon the palace in impatient expectation. Minutes sped on, and were growing into hours; still no fumata. And yet how was it possible to conceive that a pope should be elected in *eight-and-forty hours*? Suddenly are heard loud knocks of a hammer behind the partition which closed in the *loggia* (so is the balcony of the Quirinal called). The partition falls, piece by piece, and the master of the ceremonies appears in the balcony, clad in his state costume, and bearing a cross in his hand. He announces, in a sonorous voice, to the Roman population, who by this time had come thronging into the Piazza, the nomination of the new pope, in these words:—'I bring you joyous tidings: we have for our pope the most eminent and most revered Cardinal Mastai Ferretti, Archbishop of Imola, who has chosen the venerated name of Pius IX.' Immediately the air was rent with acclamations, and there seemed such unbounded enthusiasm amongst the people, that I began to inquire among my neighbours whether the new pope had any special claim to popularity; and I learned that, about thirty years before, he had been one of the handsomest and most fascinating gentlemen in Italy; that he was on the eve of marriage with a lovely and noble lady, to whom he was tenderly attached, when death suddenly deprived him of his treasure.

Her loss occasioned him such deep sorrow, that he renounced the hopes and pleasures of the world, and became a priest. He had, until then, borne the epaulettes of the Austrian service, and was distinguished among his companions by his proud and gallant bearing. Now his martial ardour was exchanged for a martyr's zeal, and he went as a missionary to preach the Gospel amongst the tribes of South America. In vain did he expose himself to the toils and perils incident to this life of self-devotion; he survived them all; and after an absence of some years, returned to Italy, whither he had been recalled by his superiors. Here his worth and merit soon became known. He was shortly afterwards appointed bishop of Imola, then archbishop, next cardinal, and now, after a single scrutiny, he had been elected pope at the age of fifty-four years!—a circumstance almost unprecedented in the annals of the sacred college.

The popularity of the new pontiff was still more apparent on the day of his coronation. On that morning his name was repeated with the wildest enthusiasm by the vast masses of people who thronged the streets to witness the solemnities of the day. Pius IX., escorted by the conclave in scarlet robes, was borne upon the *gédia* from the Quirinal to St Peter's, and from St Peter's to the Vatican. There he assumed the episcopal habit, the cope, and the silver mitre; and by the sound of the cannons of the castle of St Angelo, in the midst of all the clergy, the army, and the Roman people, he made his solemn entry into the Basilica, hung with rich damask fringed with gold; gave his feet to the cardinals, archpriests, priests, and monks to kiss; crossed the immense nave amid the clang of trumpets, which resounded from the galleries on either side; looked at the thrice-burned tow, which announcements to him the vanity of all earthly glory (*sic transit gloria mundi*); and then placing himself once more on the *gédia*, over which was borne the papal canopy, he

went to receive the tiara\* in the grand balcony of St Peter's, in the presence of an innumerable population, which crowded the pavement beneath.

Often as this ceremony has been described, it is perhaps impossible to realise a solemnity which has no parallel on earth. Picture to yourself the moment of the benediction, '*Urbi et Orbi*' (for Rome and for the universe), this living mass of human beings stretching out as far as the eye could reach; these thousands of priests and monks clad in all the rich and varied costumes of the middle ages; this sacred college, and this court, wearing scarlet robes; this mingled pealing of bells and salvos of artillery; and in the midst of all this joy and splendour, the pontiff covered with jewels, his tiara on his head, his sceptre in his hand, standing alone far above the kneeling multitude, and stretching out his arms towards the four cardinal points, blessing the family of Christ in all parts of the world.

The enthusiasm of the Romans did not end with these splendid and solemn ceremonies. All men spoke of Pius IX. as being the dispenser of no empty blessing; but that he came to bear liberty to the nations, redress to the wronged, and consolation to the afflicted. Such, truly, was his ambition; and despite of recent events, we may not say that his desire has been altogether unfulfilled. During the two years and a-half which have elapsed since that gorgeous pageant, how many deeds of goodness and mercy have crowned his daily life! The liberation of the unhappy Jews from their prison-like abode in the Ghetto is in itself a noble monument of his enlightened spirit. During that period, wheresoever misery appeared amongst the Romans, there also was Pius IX. to be found, lending his best endeavours to relieve or to allay it.

On one occasion, when a certain district near Rome was deluged by the overflowing of the Tiber, so that the wretched inhabitants were flooded in their dwellings, and they themselves exposed to the complicated miseries of want, and of exposure to the inclemency of the weather, tidings of their misfortune reached the pontiff's ear. Not content with sending some aid to the sufferers, he resolved to inspect their condition himself, and mounting his horse, rode off briskly to the scene of distress, followed by the cardinals, who, accustomed only to lounge luxuriously in their coaches, inwardly cursed the active benevolence of their new pope, which would not suffer him to indulge in lazy benevolence. Pius IX., on his accession to the papal chair, found himself placed in circumstances so intricate and perplexing, that it would have required the highest genius to direct them to a happy issue. By nature benevolent and firm, with a strong sense of justice, possessing an intelligent and cultivated mind, he longed to give freedom to his people, and to ameliorate their condition morally as well as physically. At the same time, his attachment to the church was ardent and sincere; and whilst he was full of indulgence towards his people, he was inflexible in his reform of ecclesiastical abuses, and was the practical opponent of all priestly tyranny. Many anecdotes corroborative of this assertion have been afloat in the world. We will relate but one, which has reached us from an authentic source. A rich Italian noble, desiring in his old age to atone for the sins of his youth, was advised by his confessor to bestow the bulk of his property on the church. He had two nephews, who expected to inherit his fortune, but, swayed by priestly counsel, he assigned to each of them only a small annuity, and made a will, disposing of his vast wealth in favour of the priest who should chance to say the first mass for his soul on the day of his funeral. This will was safely deposited with the proto-notary of the Holy See. The nobleman soon afterwards died, and the proto-notary, on opening his will, immediately communicated its contents to the sovereign pontiff. It was late at night when this news reached him; but the fol-

\* The tiara, or triple crown, used on this occasion is that with which Napoleon presented Pius VII. Its foundation is of white velvet; the three crowns are composed of sapphires, emeralds, rubies, and pearls. On its summit is one large emerald, surmounted by a cross of diamonds. The value of the tiara is estimated at £18,000.

lowing morning he rose before the dawn, hastened to the chapel where the funeral rites were to be performed, ordered the doors to be opened, and offered immediately the sacrifice of the mass. Having thus constituted himself the universal legate, the holy father at once sent for the nephews of the deceased, and yielded into their hands the whole of their uncle's fortune.

With such dispositions, it may readily be conceived that Pius IX. was as bitterly hated by one body of his subjects as he was beloved by another. Among his fiercest opponents were the cardinals and the Jesuits; and their enmity was so generally known, that the populace, who used to follow him in crowds as he walked along through the streets of Rome, would cry aloud, '*Santo Padre, guardasi dal bouone.*' They feared that he might be poisoned, as more than one of his predecessors had been, at the festal board. The pope was eminently a favourite amongst the female portion of his subjects, who, heretofore, had been excluded from the Quirinal, as if they were accursed beings; but Pius IX. felt that the whole human race equally claimed his care, and no petitioners were ever sent away unheeded from his gates, whatever might be their rank or sex. A clamour was raised on this subject by narrow-minded and evil-thinking men; but the holy father pursued his course of kindness and courtesy, without being over-anxious concerning the opinion of his detractors. Among those of the fair sex who requested leave to pay him their homage, was Fanny Elser, the celebrated *danseuse*, who, on her arrival at Rome, humbly solicited the honour of kissing his holiness' feet. Her profession would doubtless have insured a refusal from any other pope; but the good man graciously assented to her wishes; and she who had heretofore gloried only in the homage which everywhere awaited her, now bent her knee before the pontiff as a humble and obedient subject. By way of showing her respect, she had dressed herself magnificently, and put on all her diamonds; and however questionable the taste which dictated this display, it did not seem displeasing to the pope, who accepted it as a mark of homage to the dignity of his office.

A few days before, he had received the queen of Holland, whose toilet was far more simple than that of the fair *danseuse*. This was perhaps not the less gratifying to him, as royalty thereby signified its humility in the presence of one who claimed supremacy over the sovereigns of the earth.

The first act of Pius IX. was to grant an amnesty to those who had been banished from their country on account of political offences. At first the emigrants viewed with suspicion this act of clemency; but after a while, even these exiled patriots learned to confide in his honesty of purpose, and they flocked around him to the number of seven or eight hundred. He received them cordially, and encouraged the expression of their liberal opinions. But he was too clear-sighted not to perceive that their desires and expectations exceeded his power—nay, perhaps his intentions of reform.

The letter of a distinguished Italian refugee, dated from Rome in January 1847, just after an interview with the pope, of whose benignity and good intentions he speaks with enthusiasm, thus describes his first impressions of Pius IX.:—"I think the pope is a rare and an evangelical man. I found as much facility in expressing my opinions to him as if he had been only my equal. We spoke long on the political condition of the country, on its industrial resources, and on the liberty of the press. After much thoughtfulness of aspect and manner, he approached me with an air of confidence. "Son," said he, "I cannot totally change the form of government!" Here was the seed of future dissensions. Pius IX. was sincere in his desire to reform civil as well as ecclesiastical abuses, but he was not prepared to grant the institutions which were desired by his people. His first prepossessions were all in favour of freedom and progress. He granted liberty of the press, and became quickly alarmed at its license: he appointed a civic guard, and was surprised to find that its ardour could not be confined within the limits he had assigned to it: he named

a council, consisting chiefly of laymen, who were to assist him in the administration of civil affairs, and listened with dismay to the cries for a representative assembly, who should have the right of governing the country as well as of advising its chief.

Whether the pope was unequal to the task now assigned to him, of guiding the vessel of St Peter amid the storms of a revolutionary period, or whether the task he had undertaken was one too difficult for the ablest mortal to accomplish, we do not pretend to decide. Suffice it to say, that early in the past year symptoms of reaction began to appear. The Romans became more exacting, and their sovereign less willing to concede the privileges they desired. The appointment of Rossi, an Italian by birth, but a foreigner by prejudice as well as habit, to the post of prime minister, exasperated the people, and diminished the pope's popularity. Early in November matters came to a crisis. The Eternal City becoming the focus of popular excitement and disturbance, Rossi called to his aid a body of carabinieri, whose entrance into Rome, with the professed purpose of guarding the avenues to the Chamber of Deputies, and thus influencing their councils, roused the people into frenzy.

The minister was so unwise as to use insulting language with reference to the democratic party, and in a moment of unbridled fury, a dagger was plunged into his neck at the very door of the Palace of Legislature. This deed of violence took place on the 13th November. On that evening a vast multitude paraded the streets of Rome, preceded by the Italian flag, and singing in chorus, 'Blessed be the hand that felled the tyrant!' Next morning an assemblage of thirty thousand people, consisting of soldiers as well as citizens, marched to the Chamber of Deputies, to require that the latter might demand of the pope a democratic ministry, as well as certain concessions, the chief of which were, the recognition of Italian nationality, and the convocation of a Constituent Assembly. The deputies having joined the cortège, they proceeded to the palace of the pope, who, in reply to their demands, said he would grant nothing to violence. This inflamed the populace, who threatened to set fire to one of the gates of the Quirinal if the pope continued obstinate, and vowed that they would, after taking the palace by assault, shoot every one of its inmates, the pope only excepted. A small body of Swiss continued faithful to their duty, and kept up for some time a brisk firing from the windows; but what were they against six thousand civic guards and troops of the line, who were ranged in order of battle before the palace, with the cannon levelled against the principal entrance!

Pius IX. finding himself thus abandoned and helpless, resolved to prevent an effusion of blood by yielding to the demands of the multitude: he consented to receive Mamiani and his colleagues as ministers, and referred their other demands to the Council of Deputies. He capitulated in the name of the Swiss, on condition that their lives should be spared, and they were instantly sent out of the city, their posts being occupied by the civic guards.

Thus was the pope now in the hands of his enemies, a prisoner within his own palace, deserted by all save the diplomatic corps, who gathered around him in his extremity, to offer him the security to be derived from their presence. It is said that on first realising his fallen state, he burst into tears; and this has been imputed to him as pusillanimity; but it ought to be remembered that the feelings of Pius IX. were not those of an ordinary ruler under similar circumstances. A military despot, or a merely civil ruler, might have deemed it mercy, by the sacrifice of some human lives, to stem the torrent of revolution in its earlier stages, but he felt himself the guardian of their spiritual safety; and those tears which he is supposed to have shed, may have sprung from far deeper sources than those of cowardice or disappointed ambition. That he was not deficient in moral courage, is proved by the fact, that even at the time of his imprisonment, he resolutely refused to allow his name to be attached to any of the deeds of the government, and declined even to receive, according to custom, the daily reports of the officer of the guard.



During eight days he continued a captive in the Quirinal, that palace in whose balcony his advent to power had so recently been announced, amid the plaudits of a people intoxicated with joy at so auspicious an event. On the 24th of November he contrived to escape from the palace, in the suite of the Count de Spaur, the minister of Bavaria, whose livery he assumed for that purpose, and afterwards accompanied him to Gaeta in the disguise of his chaplain. It is said that at one moment he was in peril of being recognised, in an unfriendly village, but for the presence of mind displayed by the Bavarian minister's lady (an Englishwoman), who, pretending to be incommoded by the heat, desired the blinds of the carriage to be quickly drawn down.

It was some time before the escape transpired. When it did, the news fell like a thunderbolt upon the Romans. A note was left by his holiness for the minister Galetti, intreating him not only to spare the palace, but to protect the several persons in it, who were totally ignorant of his resolution to escape, and urging him to promote the quiet and safety of the city.

The town of Gaeta being situated on the very borders of the Roman states, it is evident that Pius IX. has not abandoned his hope of restoration; for many other more inviting residences have been offered to him; but he has expressed his desire of remaining where he is. There he is surrounded by the homages of the Neapolitans, whose royal family vie with their subjects in doing him honour. The foreign ambassadors and the cardinals have also gathered round him; and a deputation from Rome has requested an audience to supplicate his return; but the embassy was not suffered to cross the confines of the Neapolitan dominions; whether by desire of the pope, or by the command of the king of Naples, it is not very easy to ascertain.

The year on which we are now entering will doubtless unfold a new page in the eventful history of Pius IX. What may be the future complexion of his destiny we shall not presume to surmise. Some aver that he is on the eve of allying himself with that despotism which has hitherto been so alien to his feelings and principles; others foretell that he will re-enter the Eternal City, shorn of his temporal power, and merely in the capacity of ecclesiastical ruler of a Roman republic. Gladly do we leave the issue of present events to that Providence which guides and overrules the circumstances of national as well as domestic life; and we shall now close this brief sketch of Pope Pius IX. by earnestly desiring that he may prove both wise and firm at the present important crisis of his history.

#### POPULAR MEDICAL ERRORS.\*

WHEN I commenced practice as a surgeon, I found that popular notions on medical subjects exercised a considerable influence on the minds of many well-educated people, and to some extent interfered with their ready concurrence in the views of their medical advisers. In some cases I took pains to explain what are considered the more correct and scientific views; but I was not always successful in combating notions which seemed to have the authority of ages, and the suffrages of all mankind in their favour. Thus I had frequently the mortification of finding my explanations received with incredulity and distrust, and at times even with an open denial, when an experienced nurse or aged matron conceived her wisdom to be called in question. At length the idea suggested itself of noting down the common ideas entertained on many of the subjects in question, with a view to inquiring how far they may be deserving of credit. It could not well escape me that many doctrines, which had long been regarded as vulgar errors, have again been received into favour, or have been found to contain the germs of valuable discoveries.

There could not well be a more striking instance of

this than the introduction of the vaccine inoculation. Dr Baron states that whilst Jenner was a young man, engaged in pursuing his professional education at the house of his master at Sodbury, a young countrywoman applied for advice. The subject of the small-pox was casually mentioned in her presence, when she immediately remarked, 'I cannot take that disease, for I have had the cow-pox.' Now it was a popular notion in the district that those who had been the subjects of the cow-pox were not liable to the small-pox. The idea, ridiculous as it might seem to superficial thinkers, engaged the attention of Jenner, and he set himself about inquiring into the truth of the matter, and by his persevering and patient inquiries, accomplished the greatest discovery which has perhaps ever benefited mankind.

In one of Jenner's note-books of 1799, he says, 'I know no direct allusion to this disease in any ancient writer, yet the following seems not very distantly to bear on it. When the Duchess of Cleveland was taunted by her companions, Moll Davis (Lady Mary Davis) and others, that she might soon have to deplore the loss of that beauty which was then her boast (the small-pox at that time raging in London), she made a reply to this effect, "That she had no fear about the matter; for she had had a disorder which would prevent her from ever catching the small-pox."'

In 1646 Sir Thomas Browne, the author of the 'Religio Medici,' wrote his work called 'Inquiries into Vulgar and Common Errors.' In the preface, the author speaks of the difficulties of the undertaking in a style which is both quaint and amusing. 'We hope,' says he, 'it will not be unconsidered that we find no open track or constant manuduction in this labyrinth; but are oftentimes fain to wander in the *America* and untraveller parts of truth. And therefore we are oftentimes constrained to stand alone against the strength of opinion, and to meet the Goliath and giant of authority with contemptible pebbles and feeble arguments, drawn from the scrip and slender stock of ourselves.' Some of the errors which this grave writer set himself about exploding with so much appearance of erudition, would only make us smile in these days of science and learning. Thus he controverts the absurd idea that a bear licks her cubs into shape, and endeavours to show how it is to be explained 'that a man becomes hoarse or dumb if a wolf have the advantage first to eye him.'

It seems, however, that Sir Thomas Browne was himself by no means superior to the prejudices of his own day. 'It is singular,' says one of his biographers, 'that notwithstanding his zeal to detect old errors, he seems not very easy to admit new positions; for he never mentions the motion of the earth but with contempt and ridicule, though the opinion which admits it was then growing popular, and was surely plausible, even before it was confirmed as an established truth by later observations.'

Many of the expressions commonly made use of in speaking on medical subjects might be changed with advantage to suit more rational views. Some of them, it is true, are only used metaphorically, and it would not therefore be fair to censure them too rigidly. We hear of the seeds of a disease lurking in the system—of a complaint flying about, and finally settling upon a particular organ; and these phrases, though for the most part used vaguely, have to a certain extent a bias over the thoughts. There can be but little doubt that very many of the vulgar opinions were in reality at one period the established doctrines of the day; for in this, as in many other cases, it has happened that the better-informed part of mankind have forsaken the doctrines they promulgated by the time the people became familiar with them.‡ It is the same with the fashions

\* See Baron's Life of Jenner, vol. i. p. 122.

† Op. cit. p. 263.

‡ Lives of British Physicians, Family Library, p. 72.

§ They are the fossil words and phrases which show us the vestiges of decayed opinions.

\* Communicated by Mr James Bower Harrison, surgeon, of Droughton, near Manchester.

of our dress, and the pronunciation and choice of our words, the generality of mankind being of necessity more slow both to adopt and reject particular usages and customs. To a certain extent, therefore, they furnish a sort of salutary drag on the more volatile part of society. Some of the old notions which have already become sufficiently exploded are still embalmed, as it were, in our language and common forms of expression. We speak of a 'tender heart' and a 'true-hearted friend,' as though this organ were the seat of the mind. Then we read in Scripture of 'bowels of compassion;' and the words 'melancholy choler,' and the 'spleen,' when used for ill-temper, are farther examples of words taking their origin in the theories of a former day.

Much ingenuity and learning might be displayed in searching out and collecting into a focus the peculiar notions of former times; but this would be a work of considerable extent, and more curious and entertaining than useful. For my part, I wish to comment upon the opinions which now actually influence the minds of the public, or give a colouring to their views of disease. Simple as many of them may seem, they are the secret springs which determine the views of people, often in opposition to the dictates of their professional advisers. On this account, therefore, they must be treated with respect—a respect which they deserve from their influence, if not from their justness.

I have purposely, then, brought forward the opinions which I have found to be the most prevalent and the most influential, without any reference to their plausibility or ingenuity, and in preference to the discussion of others which might have admitted of more scope for entertainment or for professional research. On this account I must be excused for speaking of many things which are simple, and perhaps ludicrous and commonplace, and also for passing by many subjects which are rich in matter for curiosity and entertainment, as well as the display of such literary industry as might be devoted to them.

I shall now proceed to the consideration of the several common errors which have presented themselves to my mind, making on each a few very brief remarks, but such as I imagine may be sufficient, without being tedious.

I am quite aware that there are very many (not to speak of professional readers) to whom all these explanations may be altogether unnecessary, but I am sure I shall have their indulgence if the comments which I make are only acceptable to others. To all, notions which are common must, as such, be of some interest, whatever may be their absurdity, and the remarks made on them may at least serve to connect them together. In the course of this paper, then, I shall have to introduce many commonplaces; but this, it must be remembered, is inseparable from the subject. I may also state that I have purposely chosen to treat the subject in a plain, and somewhat colloquial style; for it seems to me that common ideas are best explained in a familiar manner, and that popular notions are best embodied in the language in which they are usually delivered.

**Lunatics.**—There is a common notion that lunatics are influenced by the moon. The term lunatic was no doubt given to insane people from the supposed influence of the moon in producing madness. This opinion is in some degree preserved by the continued employment of the term *lunatic*, as well as by that fondness for the marvellous which is so common to mankind. Even at the present day, people will shake their heads and allude significantly to the full of the moon—'Poor Mr So-and-so,' they will say, 'is a little off the cock just now—a little wrong in the upper storey; but then it is the full of the moon next Thursday.' There does not appear to be any real ground for the belief that the moon exercises this baneful influence on the human mind, although it is acknowledged that insane people are usually somewhat more than ordinarily restless at the full of the moon. The celebrated French writer Esquirol attributes this to the effect of the increased light, and

states that the break of day occasions a similar agitation. 'Light,' he asserts, 'frightens some lunatics, pleases others, but agitates all.\*

**Of Seasons.**—There is a very common, and very old notion, that what are called *cooling medicines* should be taken at particular periods of the year, especially in the spring. Every practitioner will occasionally be consulted on this subject, and very often a great disposition is shown by medical men to fall in with popular views. Many a poor child has been condemned to a pot of brimstone and treacle merely because it was the spring-time. I imagine parents are not always ready to carry out these views in their own cases. Hippocrates advocates such a system in his 47th aphorism, section vi. 'If bleeding or purging be requisite,' says he, 'spring is the most convenient time for either.' He repeats the same view in other places. There was a great deal of importance attached to seasons in the treatment of diseases by the old medical authorities; but we find very little on this subject in our best modern works. For my part I don't see why we should take physic unless we are ill. The public have very curious, and, I should think, very ill-defined ideas of cooling physic, and of medicines for purifying the blood. That the ancients set considerable importance on seasons, will appear from the most casual inspection of their works. Thus *Ætius*, in his directions for the cure of the gout, laid down a distinct regimen for each month. 'In September, the diet should be wholly milk; in October, garlic must be eaten; in November, bathing is prohibited; in December, cabbage; in January, the patient should take a glass of pure wine every morning; in February, he must not eat beet; in March, he must mix sweets both with his eatables and drinkables; in April, he must refrain from horse-radish; and in May, from the fish called polypus; in June, he must take cold water in the morning; in July, abstinence must be practised; in August, he must not eat mallows.'†

**Hair.**—That hair turns gray in a single night.

In a popular but ~~also~~ treatise on diseases of the skin (by Erasmus Wilson),‡ this subject is alluded to in the following terms:—'Much less can I give credit to the bleaching of the hair in a single night or a single week. The first step in the change may have been made in a single night, and on that night week the whole of the hairs of the head may have become white at their roots; this is perfectly possible, and the only reasonable explanation of the circumstance. Thus we learn that Marie-Antoinette became gray in a short period, as did the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots.' He alludes to the passage in the 'Prisoner of Chillon,' showing that the error has the weight of poetical authority in its favour—

'My hair is gray, though not with years,  
Nor grew it white  
In a single night,  
As men's have grown from sudden fears.'

After proceeding to relate several amusing cases of this reputed bleaching of the hair, he goes on to speak of another common error with respect to the hair:§—'A prevalent belief, strengthened by the opinion of several modern French writers on this subject, is, that the hairs grow after death. It is true that they lengthen, but their lengthening results from the contraction of the skin towards their roots, and not from the continuance of a vital process after the death of the individual. But the older writers outstrip the moderns in invention; for in the "Philosophical Collections," Wulferus gives the account of a woman buried at Nuremberg, whose grave being opened forty-three years after her death, there was hair found issuing forth plentifully through the clefts of the coffin, inasmuch that there was some reason to imagine the coffin had some

\* Beck's Medical Jurisprudence, p. 425.

† Hamilton's History of Medicine, vol. i. p. 174.

‡ Wilson on Healthy Skin, p. 54.

§ Op. cit. p. 100.

time been covered all over with hair. Mr Arnold gives "the relation of a man hanged for theft, who in a little time, while yet he hung upon the gallows, had his body strangely covered over with hairs."

**Jaundice.**—There is a common saying (I will scarcely venture to call it an opinion) that jaundiced people see things yellow.

How common to hear of the jaundiced eye, as another word for prejudice! It being of course implied that the subject sees through a coloured medium. It occasionally does happen that a person having the jaundice sees objects yellow, but this is rather the exception than the rule, and seems to be dependent on some enlarged and tortuous vessel crossing the transparent part of the eye when the vision has been previously impaired by some disease. Dr Watson mentions this subject in his valuable lectures on the Practice of Physic.\* 'You are aware,' says he, 'of the vulgar notion that to a jaundiced eye all things appear yellow. It is an old notion, for we find it expressed by Lucretius—"Lurida præterea fuit quæcunque tuentur arquati." Heberden was disposed to regard this as a mere poetical fiction, but certainly it is sometimes, though very rarely indeed, a fact.' He goes on to say that he has been assured by a medical man of his own acquaintance that objects appeared coloured to him in his own experience of the complaint; also that Dr Mason Good saw things yellow when he was jaundiced. Dr Elliotson also relates one or two cases. In 1826 he had a case in St Thomas's Hospital, where there was a slight opacity of the transparent part of one eye, through which ran two large vessels, and with this eye the patient saw yellow; but with the other eye he saw things of their natural colour. In 1827 he had a patient who saw things yellow with both eyes, but he had inflammation of the eyes. In 1831 he had another case. He further mentions that Dr Pemberton saw this occurrence twice; but sufficient has been said, and the explanation seems to me satisfactory—namely, that in the cases where objects appear yellow, there must exist some inflammation of the cornea, or some opacity with enlarged vessels.

**Of Constitution.**—Fortunately people are in general more disposed to consider their constitutional powers good than otherwise, and this in a degree that would indeed be amusing, if it were not for the gravity of the subject. A patient will say to you, 'Really, doctor, I have never known what it is to have a moment's entire ease these many years: I must have had an excellent constitution originally; and, do you know, it is my firm opinion that I'm sound yet. If I could only get rid of this cough, I should be quite well.' Speeches of this sort are made over and over again by people who have every possible appearance of having the worst constitutions imaginable, and in fact have had every possible evidence themselves of such imperfection of physical power. Some of the most confirmed forms of scrofula show themselves by a succession of slow diseased actions—inflammation of the eyes, enlargements of the glands in the neck, abscesses, diseased hips, and perhaps finally consumption—and these are the people who must have had originally excellent constitutions! The more they have suffered, and do suffer, the more they praise their constitutions; they imagine that the diseases have come, one after the other, like the ghosts in Macbeth—

\* Another—and yet a seventh: I'll see no more—and yet the eighth appears.

It never enters their minds that a poor constitution is the cause of all these visitations, rather than the bulwark against which they are impotently directed.

**Of Consumption.**—That consumption is catching is a popular opinion, which, in this country at least, is not recognised by the profession. I believe such an opinion, however, to be generally entertained in some parts of the

continent, especially in Spain, Portugal, and Italy. They even burn the clothes of those who have died of the disease, to prevent risk of contagion. It is true that a husband and wife will every now and then die consecutively of this complaint; but this is not more than we should have been led to expect *à priori*; for it not unfrequently must happen that consumptive families will intermarry. I think, indeed, the frequency of these cases of apparent contagion is not greater than what might be supposed likely to occur from mere coincidence in a disease which is so widely diffused. It must be admitted, also, that the anxiety and grief experienced by the survivor in case of the first death will do much to hasten the complaint; and thus the appearance of contagion will be heightened by the rapidity of the succession. Further, there is an idea prevalent that a consumption is cured by an asthma: I conceive this to be altogether erroneous. Asthmatic people are no doubt often considered by the public as consumptive, and it then becomes a matter of surprise that these people continue to live year after year. Sometimes these asthmatic people do die in the end consumptive. Supposing, indeed, that a few asthmatic people are found after death to have had tubercles in the lungs, it is scarcely logical to infer that the consumption would have been more rapidly developed if the asthma had not existed. Because those who have asthma in its most marked form do not necessarily become consumptive, is no proof that the asthma prevents consumption. I think the great bulk of consumptive people would be found free from gout; but are we therefore to try to induce gout in order to prevent consumption? My own idea of this opinion about asthma curing consumption, is not only that it is an error, but that it is one calculated to do much mischief. There is also a notion that an ague cures consumption. This is equally ridiculous. There are, in fact, many cases of consumption in the aguish districts. The ague has indeed been often reputed as a curative agent. An attack of the ague may probably have put a stop to some nervous and other complaints. Dr Elliotson states, 'that ague has been thought so capital a thing, that some writers contend it never should be cured; and a proverb once prevailed that

'An ague in spring  
Is fit for a king.'

He mentions that Dr Gregory saw a case of palpitation cured by it, and that Dr Fordyce had known many cases cured by it.\* However, I should myself be very sorry to try it; and I should be very sceptical of its doing real good in any case.

**Proud Flesh.**—Patients will frequently come to us to know if there is any proud flesh in their wounds. The fear of proud flesh is very general, and brings many patients to the doctor whom he would otherwise never see. When a wound is attended with loss of substance, it is gradually filled up by the growth of the surrounding parts—a process which is called granulation, from the grain-like surface it presents. The granulations sometimes rise above the level of the surface; and I suppose the term 'proud flesh' was given to this appearance as a figurative term for a luxuriant or forward growth. There is nothing really bad or malignant, as it is called, in the elevation, but it is rather indicative of a complete and rapid repair. There are, it is true, complaints which are attended with what are named malignant fungous growths; but they are happily very rare, and quite unconnected with the healing of common sores. I shall not dwell, however, upon the latter, as it would carry me on to the description of a disease which is out of my present province, and would only be tedious or unintelligible to unprofessional persons. It is perhaps, after all, almost a pity to disabuse the public mind of the idea of proud flesh; for it is friendly to the doctors, and may tend to induce the people to have their sores better looked after.

\* Watson's Lectures on the Principles and Practice of Medicine, vol. ii. p. 522.

\* Elliotson's Lectures on the Practice of Physic, p. 274.



*Broke a Blood-vessel.*—The phrase 'broke a blood-vessel' is very common; and I imagine that it is commonly supposed, in the case of spitting of blood, that a large blood-vessel has given way in the lungs. Blood-vessels do sometimes become diseased, and give way; but in the great number of instances in which spitting of blood arises, the blood is exuded from the surface, as it is in bleeding of the nose. On inspection after death of the greater part of the bodies of those who have lost large quantities of blood by spitting, no trace has been discovered of any ruptured vessel, so that the term is not to be considered literal in its application to the ordinary cases of spitting of blood. In apoplexy, however, it is often found that a blood-vessel has actually given way in the brain, and the clot is discovered after death; so that if we spoke of this latter complaint as the breaking of a blood-vessel, we should be more likely to be correct.

#### THE HARVEST IN BRITTANY.

OFTEN had I watched the ingathering of the harvest, and shared in the joyous festivity of those by whose labours it was treasured up in our garners; but having heard some curious details concerning the peculiarities observable in Brittany on those occasions, I longed to find myself among the primitive people of that province during the season of their harvest labours. I had been told of the veneration with which the Bretons—still imbued with the spirit of Druidical polytheism—watched the great mystery of vegetable reproduction, and of the devotion with which they gathered in the ripe and yellow corn, seeming almost to adore under this material form a benevolent Deity. I was very glad, therefore, to have an opportunity of witnessing these singular traces of Paganism, veiled as they are, but not destroyed, by Christianity. Our whole party shared in these feelings of curiosity and interest. Accordingly, we resolved to rise at the dawn of day, that we might be present at the earliest labours of the harvest.

About forty peasants were assembled in the thrashing-floor. They were clad in coarse shirts and linen trousers, their feet bare, and their heads only partially covered by the Greek cap, worn carelessly on one side. Each of them bore a sickle beneath his arm. They were full of life and movement, looking earnestly towards the plain, as if longing to begin their appointed work.

On a given signal, they advanced towards that portion of the tilled land which was to be the first reaped, and placed themselves in a line at some distance from each other, so as to cover a good deal of ground. There was a moment's pause; and while passing their scythes lightly over the black stone which was to lend them a finer edge, the labourers looked thoughtfully on the wide extent of corn-land lying before them. I approached an aged peasant, who was so absorbed in the contemplation, that he had allowed his pipe to extinguish itself between his teeth.

'Well, my friend,' said I, 'here is a glorious harvest.'

'Yes, sir: God is very bountiful!' was his reply; adding immediately, 'there is gold in those ears, sir!'

'Yet I am told that there was no manure, and very little labour, expended on this tract of land; that the seed was merely thrown into the earth.'

The old man smiled. 'It is, sir, that the earth here is still young; so she gives without reckoning. When she grows older, she will become more prudent!'

At this moment the proprietor gave orders to the head reaper to begin. This leader was a young man of middle stature, but of remarkable strength and beauty. There was an elastic vigour in his movements, and a power of muscle, which belong to the perfection of healthful manhood. It was owing to his strength and skill that he enjoyed the distinction of leading this band of labourers; not that the title of chief had been expressly conferred on him, neither had he claimed it for himself; but it fell to his lot through that tacit con-

viction of superiority which accompanies a remarkable capacity of any kind.

No sooner had the expected signal been made, than he raised his sickle with a joyous cry, and was about to give the first stroke, when a sudden thought seemed to arrest his hand, and turning round towards the old man, with whom I had been speaking, he approached him with an uncovered head.

'Take the lead of the reapers, my father,' said he, in a respectful tone: 'it is not fitting that young men should be in the foremost rank, and the elder ones behind.'

A gleam of joy lighted up the sunburnt features of the old peasant as he silently took the place which his son had just relinquished, while the latter fell to the rear. Immediately the work began, and continued, with little intermission, until the approach of evening, when they began to carry the sheaves of corn to the thrashing-floor. When the sun was setting, we watched the first cart laden with corn, as it drew nigh to the farmhouse. It advanced across the sand, accompanied by the music of countless bells, which tingled on the horses' heads, and by the joyous songs of the reapers who were following it. A long tri-coloured flag floated over the corn, and from beneath its folds were peeping two little laughing urchins, who were half buried amid the heaps of corn, while they *made-believe* to be guiding the horses, whose reins lay carelessly in their hands. We stopped a moment to consider this beautiful picture, so rich in contrasts and in poetic thought; for the most prosaic mind could not help being interested by the sight of this rich harvest store advancing across a region which had recently been won from the ocean; guided only by children, and escorted by the peasants of the soil.

The following day was spent in beating out the corn. The old man who had accepted from his son the leadership of the peasants kept his post. When the sheaves were laid upon the floor, he placed his foot upon the outspread corn, and made thereon with his sickle the sign of the cross, muttering the while a few words of prayer. No sooner had this brief religious ceremony been concluded, than the other labourers placed themselves around the floor. At first, their flails were raised slowly, and without order, and they balanced themselves, as if preparing for some powerful effort; but suddenly, on hearing the signal cry from their leader, every flail was raised at the same moment, and fell to the earth simultaneously—this movement being continued with a measured cadence. The *batterie*, at first light and moderate, grew more and more animated, until at length it became vehement and passionate. The reapers, carried away by a sort of nervous inebriety, sprang upon the bounding straw, whereon their blows fell with the fury of a summer hail-storm. The dust flew about them in whirling clouds, and their brows were laden with moisture. Now and then weariness would overtake them, and the noise would become more hushed, as if coming from a distance. Then their aged leader would utter a peculiar cry of encouragement or of reproach, and thirty voices would echo it, and every flail would be raised with tenfold vigour, and the noise of the *batterie* would sound like an approaching thunder-storm, waxing each moment louder and deeper.

I remained in the granary all day, watching the animated picture which presented itself, and observing, with a sort of dreaming curiosity, all the scenes of this country drama. The ensuing morning, the sun, which had hitherto shone out with continued brilliancy, veiled itself with clouds, and a soft drizzling rain impeded the harvest work. The peasants began to cover in the thrashing-floor, and to gather the beaten corn into the barn. Unfortunately, these operations went on slowly in comparison with the amount of work to be done. The rain fell heavier, and fears were entertained lest part of the wheat, which was still unhoosed, might be seriously injured. The proprietor was lamenting the impossibility of procuring as many hands as were needful to gather in the grain more rapidly, when an old

man, followed by five young ones, all armed with forks and rakes, entered the barn. He advanced towards the astonished farmer, and uncovering his white hairs—'I have heard,' said he, 'that you were gathering in your harvest, and seeing this rain come on so heavily, I thought that a dozen more arms might be of service to you, so I am come with my lads.'

'May God bless you, good father!' said the proprietor, offering his hand to the venerable peasant; 'but I did not expect this aid from you. Have you, then, forgotten our lawsuit, and the fine inflicted on you through my means?'

The old man shrugged his shoulders, saying, 'Our Saviour was more outraged than ever I was, and he forgave his murderers. Besides, the quarrels of neighbours should not be allowed to diminish the poor man's bread. He who lets God's wheat be destroyed, cannot be a good Christian. Now we are going to carry home your corn; and when the sun shines out again, your thrashers will make room for us, and we will help them to make up for lost time.'

Without waiting to receive the thanks which were being lavished on him by the farmer, the old man and his sons hastened to join the reapers, with whom they laboured until evening. The next morning they returned to their work; and when the harvest had all been safely gathered in, they withdrew to their home without accepting any reward, and seeming utterly unconscious that they had done aught which deserved the smallest praise or approval.

#### ENEMIES.

Have you enemies? Go straight on, and mind them not. If they block up your path, walk around them, and do your duty regardless of their spite. A man who has no enemies is seldom good for anything: he is made of that kind of material which is so easily worked, that every one has a hand in it. A sterling character—one who thinks for himself, and speaks what he thinks—is always sure to have enemies. They are as necessary to him as fresh air: they keep him alive and active. A celebrated character, who was surrounded with enemies, used to remark—'They are sparks which, if you do not blow, will go out of themselves.' Let this be your feeling while endeavouring to live down the scandal of those who are bitter against you. If you stop to dispute, you do but as they desire, and open the way for more abuse. Let the poor fellows talk; there will be a reaction if you perform but your duty, and hundreds who were once alienated from you will flock to you and acknowledge their error.—*Alexander's Messenger.*

#### ANECDOTE OF A NEWFOUNDLAND DOG.

A gentleman connected with the Newfoundland fishery was once possessed of a dog of singular fidelity and sagacity. On one occasion a boat and a crew in his employ were in circumstances of considerable peril, just outside a line of breakers, which—owing to some change in wind or weather—had, since the departure of the boat, rendered the return-passage through them most hazardous. The spectators on shore were quite unable to render any assistance to their friends afloat. Much time had been spent, and the danger seemed to increase rather than diminish. Our friend, the dog, looked on for a length of time, evidently aware of there being great cause for anxiety in those around. Presently, however, he took to the water, and made his way through to the boat. The crew supposed he wished to join them, and made various attempts to induce him to come aboard; but no! he would not go within their reach, but continued swimming about a short distance from them. After a while, and several comments on the peculiar conduct of the dog, one of the hands suddenly divined his apparent meaning: 'Give him the end of a rope,' he said; 'that is what he wants.' The rope was thrown—the dog seized the end in an instant, turned round, and made straight for the shore; where a few minutes afterwards boat and crew—thanks to the intelligence of their four-footed friend—were placed safe and undamaged. Was there no reasoning here? No acting with a view to an end or for a given motive? Or was it nothing but ordinary instinct?—*Rev. J. C. Atkinson in 'The Zoologist.'*

#### MR BURTON'S WORK ON POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ECONOMY.

DURING the last twelve months a desire has been repeatedly expressed to us for a short popular work treating of the more important questions in political and social economy. These requests were suggested by the convulsed state of Europe. The wildest theories, striking at the root of law, order, and individual rights, were to all appearance about to dissolve society into its rude elements. One of the greatest literary men of the age had found it necessary to write a treatise to prove that 'property is not theft.' While such strange and disorderly sentiments were afloat, it is not surprising that many persons should have desired to see a popular work explanatory of the true and imperishable principles on which society is founded, and by which it carries on its complex operations.

In the hope of meeting this wish, Mr J. H. Burton has, at our request, undertaken a small work, which is now published as part of the series of works now issuing under the title of 'CHAMBERS'S INSTRUCTIVE AND ENTERTAINING LIBRARY.'

Referring to the manner in which he has treated his subject, the author observes that 'It is a common complaint against political economy, in the form in which it is usually embodied, that though dealing with man, his passions and wants, and with the elements of his happiness and his misery, it is as hard and cold as if it gave expression to the laws of inanimate nature. From every truth in political economy, the acting and thinking man should be able to derive a rule of life, with reference to evils that may be practically avoided, and good that may be rationally anticipated; but he complains that even in matters like surplus population, commercial revulsions, gluts, and panics, and labour and its rewards, in which his temporal prospects, and those of the whole race, are so deeply involved, he finds only cold formulas or abstract laws, derived from what men usually do, not indicating what they might accomplish; and thus he fails to acquire from these abstractions the light and assistance which he seeks, to cheer, encourage, and fortify him in his path through life. It may be mainly attributed to the want of living systems founded on the true principles of political economy, that of late, projects founded on a contradiction of the whole science, and resting on the most dangerous and disorganising fallacies, have been so extensively adopted as to lead to the direst calamities. The false opinions presented themselves in that living, breathing form which the true science would not condescend to adopt; and the multitude, demanding a guide that pointed to practical conduct, instead of merely developing rigid formulas, followed the first that offered itself.'

Avoiding defects of this nature, the author has adapted his doctrines to the popular understanding, and brought them into relation with the ordinary course of events.

With these explanations, we respectfully dedicate 'Political and Social Economy' to the use of all classes of The People. W. AND R. C.

#### LISTENING TO EVIL REPORTS.

The longer I live, the more I feel the importance of adhering to the rule which I have laid down for myself in relation to such matters:—1. To hear as little as possible whatever is to the prejudice of others. 2. To believe nothing of the kind till I am absolutely forced to it. 3. Never to drink into the spirit of one who circulates an evil report. 4. Always to moderate, as far as I can, the unkindness which is expressed towards others. 5. Always to believe that, if the other side were heard, a very different account would be given of the matter.—*Carus's Life of Simeon.*

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